

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, M.S. 19-31
Sacramento, CA 95814



January 5, 1987

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 87-01

TO: All County Welfare Departments
All Public and Private Adoption Agencies
All SDSS Adoptions District Offices

SUBJECT: IMPLEMENTATION OF AB 4295, MANDATING THE PHOTO-LISTING SERVICE

REFERENCE: ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 86-106

Agencies were previously sent a copy of AB 4295 (Chapter 445, Statutes of 1986) which adds Section 224b to the Civil Code. This legislation requires the State Department of Social Services (SDSS) to establish a statewide photo-listing service for all licensed adoption agencies to aid in recruiting adoptive families for children who are legally freed and whose case plan goal is adoption. It requires all licensed adoption agencies to send to the photo-listing service, a recent photograph and description of the child within 15 working days of the time that the child becomes free for adoption. Additionally, it requires the agencies to provide updated information. Enclosed with this letter is the prescribed form for use in registering the children with the photo-listing service. Agencies will need to make copies of this form until it becomes available in the SDSS warehouse. Anticipated date of availability is during the month of December 1986. It is anticipated that training on the operation of the new children's photo-listing service, California's Waiting Children, will be given in early 1987. The Adoptions Branch is developing regulations to implement the provisions of the legislation. The proposed regulations provide for the following:

When To Photo-List A Child

1. All legally freed children whose case plan goal is adoption shall be photo-listed with the SDSS Children's Album within 15 working days after being freed for adoption, unless deferred.

2. A child shall be deferred from the photo-listing service when his/her foster parents or other identified individuals have applied to adopt the child and their applications have not yet been processed by the adoption agency. It is the agency's responsibility to contact the Department, within 15 working days of the time that the child becomes freed for adoption, even if a child is to be deferred from the photo-listing.
3. A child who has been deferred due to a pending application for his/her adoption shall be listed with the photo-listing service within 60 working days of the date the child was legally freed, unless a notice of adoptive placement has been filed.
4. A child 12 years of age or older who will not consent to his/her adoption is deferred from being photo-listed. If he/she should consent later to be adopted and is legally freed, that child must be photo-listed, unless deferred for other reasons. (See Item 2 above)
5. A child may be photo-listed prior to becoming legally freed when adoption is the case plan. Consent from either the birth parent(s), legal guardian or the court must be obtained prior to photo-listing.

How To Photo-List A Child

1. Complete the Photo-Listing Data Sheet, AD 909 (See Attachment A).
2. Complete a narrative description of each child (See Narrative Description below and Attachments B/C-examples).

"NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION"

The narrative description should be limited to three or four concise paragraphs with information arranged in the following manner:

- o The first paragraph should include:
 - a. the child's date of birth;
 - b. the child's religious preference; if no preference indicate "NONE";
 - c. whether the child is a member of a sibling group;
 - d. the child's ethnicity; if child is of a mixed background, identify ethnicities (i.e., Black/White, Hispanic/Asian, etc.).
- o The second paragraph should include: some positive statements about the child's personality, activities, special interests, achievements, aspirations, etc.
NOTE: A personalized statement from the child on the kind of family environment he/she would prefer or just a statement in general from the child is encouraged, but not a prerequisite to photo-list.
- o The third paragraph should include: a brief summary of the child's medical, educational, psychological and behavioral problems, if any, and measures that are being taken to treat or eliminate these problems.
- o The fourth paragraph should include:
 - a. placement restrictions, if any, such as geographic (i.e., which may sever ties between relatives or significant others);
 - b. the type of family sought (one or two parent and the characteristics they should possess);

- c. the desired position of the child in the prospective family (i.e., oldest, youngest, middle child, only child); or
 - d. any detail that has been overlooked or omitted in prior paragraphs. Also, in this paragraph indicate whether an AAP subsidy is available for this placement.
3. Include two 3 1/2" x 3 1/2" black and white only glossy photographs of each child to be photo-listed. Negatives may also be submitted in lieu of the photographs themselves. (See Attachment D for Photography specifications)
 4. Send your photo-listing package (Items 1, 2 and 3 above) to:

State Department of Social Services
Adoptions Branch
744 P Street, M.S. 19-31
Sacramento, CA 95814

Attention: Photo-Listing Coordinator

Updating Photo-Listings

1. The adoption agency must contact the Photo-Listing Coordinator within two (2) working days, by telephone, regarding any change in the photo-listing status of any child, (i.e., any significant change in the child's physical, mental or behavioral status, if the child's case plan goal is revised, death of a child, if the child has reached the age of consent, the child is placed in an adoptive home, etc.). The Photo-Listing Coordinator will mail a revised insert to album holders with "PLACED" or "REMOVED" stamped across the narrative description when the change in the photo-listing status of a child results in removal of a child's photograph and description from the service or a child has been placed in an adoptive home (See Attachments F and G). This information will notify the agency to remove that photo-listing from the album.

2. Within 15 working days following a one-year period in which a child is listed with the service but not yet placed or removed, an updated photograph and description of each child shall be submitted to the Photo-Listing Coordinator.
3. For children age 0 to 3, updated photographs shall be submitted to the Photo-Listing Coordinator every six (6) months.
4. The Photo-Listing Coordinator will provide an annual update to all subscribers of the photo-listing service to ensure album contents are accurate and complete.
5. The Photo-Listing Coordinator will conduct a semi-annual review of the photo-listing status of all legally freed children whose case plan goal is adoption, including those who are registered with the photo-listing service and those whose registrations have been deferred to ensure compliance with photo-listing requirements.

Also, a Glossary of Terms is enclosed (see Attachment E). The Glossary of Terms defines some of the most common terminology used by adoption caseworkers in describing the children's physical, emotional or mental condition. The Glossary of Terms can be a resource for the prospective adoptive family to understand more fully the descriptions of the children.

All children who are currently registered with the Adoption Resource Referral Center (ARRC) Children's Album and who meet the statutory listing criteria outlined above, must be listed with the new photo-listing service. Licensed adoption agencies shall submit to SDSS a recent photograph and a completed Photo-Listing Data Sheet of each child currently registered with ARRC by his/her agency within 10 working days of receipt of this notice. Please refer to the section of the procedures for "How To Photo-List A Child" when transferring ARRC registrants to the new service.

If you have questions regarding this letter, please contact Mr. Marvin Sims, Photo-Listing Coordinator, at (916) 323-0590.



LOREN D. SUTER
Deputy Director
Adult and Family Services Division

Enclosures

cc: CWDA

ATTACHMENT A

PHOTO LISTING DATA SHEET

IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (FOR DSS USE ONLY)

INSTRUCTION: PLEASE TYPE

NAME (LAST)		(FIRST)	(MIDDLE INITIAL)	(AKA)	DATE OF BIRTH
<input type="checkbox"/> MALE <input type="checkbox"/> FEMALE		RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE		SIBLINGS <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	HOW MANY Male(s) _____ Female(s) _____
ETHNIC ORIGIN					
<input type="checkbox"/> WHITE		<input type="checkbox"/> BLACK		<input type="checkbox"/> HISPANIC <input type="checkbox"/> NATIVE AMERICAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER		<input type="checkbox"/> MIXED BACKGROUND (Specify) _____			
LEGAL STATUS					AAP ELIGIBLE
<input type="checkbox"/> TOTALLY FREE		<input type="checkbox"/> PARTIALLY FREE		<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
AGENCY NAME					
ADOPTIONS CASEWORKER			TELEPHONE NUMBER ()		DATE (MONTH, DAY, AND YEAR)
DESCRIPTION OF CHILD (DO NOT FOLD)					

SAMPLE

PHOTO LISTING DATA SHEET (Continued)

SAMPLE

California's
Waiting Children
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

AGENCY ADDRESS

sample narrative

This is Andrea, a soft-spoken quiet child with beautiful brown eyes and a winning smile to match. She was born February 28, 19__ and has a religious preference of Protestant.

Proud and aware of her personal appearance, Andrea is meticulous about her hair and dress. Reading, jumping rope, roller skating and swimming are some of her favorite activities. She aspires to become an artist; therefore, it is no wonder that art is her most favorite academic subject. A family with a sister and brother and the opportunity to have slumber parties are her dearest wishes.

Presently, Andrea is enrolled in special education classes, as she is educably mentally retarded. Occasionally, there are behavior problems, withdrawn and depressive moods, but they have improved significantly with counseling. She has been diagnosed as having a minor heart murmur, but there are no current restrictions on her activities.

Because she was abused earlier in life, Andrea needs a warm single or two-parent family with other children and extended family to give her a sense of belonging and to help boost her self-esteem. She would benefit most from a family who can provide patience, structure and understanding of her special needs.

sample narrative

Meet Victor, a handsome likeable young man who enjoys telling stories and jokes. Victor was born July 14, 19__ and has no religious preference. He is enjoyable, personable and wants to have a family of his own.

Victor has many interests including sports, videos, cooking, shopping and family outings. As with most youngsters, Victor's career goals have undergone several revisions, but he has his sights on becoming an Air Force pilot. Victor's foster parents note his willingness to perform his assigned "around-the-house" chores.

Socially, Victor oftentimes displays immature behavior. He needs to put great effort into his school work to achieve average grades. His school has recommended that he be placed in a behavior disorder classroom so he can receive the extra attention he needs to develop and mature. He is receiving counseling and is making progress in self-awareness, accountability for behavior, and resolving past separation issues. Counseling may need to continue after adoption. He gets along well with adults, but is intolerant of teasing and conflicts among his peers and sometimes reacts physically.

An energetic single or two-parent family who can give much attention, affection and support to Victor, as well as be tolerant of impulsive behaviors, will be considered. He will also need continued help to accept responsibility for his behavior. Victor's adoptive family will find him a fine addition to their home.

Photography

- o For the best possible reproduction, photographs should be clear, especially the facial features/expressions.
- o Two or more 3 1/2" x 3 1/2" black and white glossies or negatives must accompany the Photo-Listing Data Sheet. Photos may be larger, but not smaller than the stated size.
- o For older children, a chest-to-head close-up is most desirable with the facial features/expression clearly defined. For younger children, especially infants, a full-body close-up is preferable.
- o For the best possible representation of the children's current appearance, photographs should be no more than six months old, preferably three months.
- o For good quality reproductions, encourage the children to wear medium to dark tone clothing as light clothing tends to blend too much or distract from the children's varying complexions.
- o The children should be well groomed.
- o Hats, scarves and other head coverings should be removed prior to the photographic session. Hair ornaments, such as ribbons, decorative hair combs or beads are acceptable as long as they do not distract from or obscure the child's facial features/expression.
- o Encourage the children to smile and display cheerful, happy expressions during the photographic session.
- o There must be no identifying information in the background of the photograph that might serve as a lead to the children's specific whereabouts or full identity.
- o Children may be photographed with a favorite toy or pet.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

1. ACCLIMATIZATION means making an adjustment to a new environment.
2. ADOPTION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (AAP) means a program of financial and/or medical assistance to facilitate the adoption of hard-to-place children.
3. ADOPTIVE PLACEMENT AGREEMENT is an agreement between the adoption agency and the prospective adoptive parents for the adoptive placement of a child which specifies the terms and conditions of the placement.
4. ADOPTIVE PARENT is a person who has obtained a final decree for the adoption of a particular child or children.
5. AGENCY is a licensed California public or private adoption agency or the State Department of Social Services' (SDSS) District Offices.
6. AMBULATORY is the ability to walk about: not confined to bed or wheelchair.
7. APNEA is the absence of or temporary loss of breathing, usually in newborn babies.
8. AUTISM/AUTISTIC is a mental disorder in children causing extreme withdrawal or self-absorption. Some signs are: repetitive playing, banging head, speaking late or staying mute, rocking to and fro, handflapping, indifference to the parents, etc.
9. BIRTH PARENTS are the biological parents of a child.
10. CEREBRAL PALSY is any disturbance of the motor functions caused by a congenital birth defect of the brain or by birth injury.
11. CLEFT LIP/CLEFT PALATE are developmental deformities present at birth, but correctable by surgery, varying from nasal and lip notching to deep splits running the full length of the roof of the mouth to the lip on both sides of the mouth.

12. DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY means a physical or mental disability which originates before an individual attains age 18, continues indefinitely and constitutes a substantial handicap for such individual.
13. DOWN'S SYNDROME is a condition present at birth which produces various degrees of mental retardation and may produce some physical abnormalities.
14. DYSLEXIA or "word blindness," is a condition which creates difficulty in understanding the spoken or written word.
15. EMOTIONALLY DISORDERED means a child who has been diagnosed by a mental health professional as having a mental disorder, other than mental retardation, which has required treatment in the form of medication, psychotherapy and/or psychiatric hospitalization.
16. ENURESIS means bedwetting.
17. FOS/ADOPT or RISK ADOPT is a placement where a child not yet freed for adoption is placed in a home approved for adoption, on the basis that if and when the child is freed, he/she will be adopted by that family.
18. HEMOPHILIA is an inherited bleeding disorder caused by a deficiency of clotting factors in the blood.
19. HOME STUDY is the social and psychological assessment to determine a potential adoptive family's parenting skills or abilities.
20. HYPERACTIVE is a state characterized by general restlessness or excessive movement.
21. INDEPENDENT ADOPTION is an adoption in which the biological parent selects the person or persons to become the child's adoptive parent or parents and places the child directly with the selected person or persons.

22. LEGALLY FREE is the term used to describe a child whose rights of all parents have been terminated voluntary or by court action.
23. MENTALLY RETARDED describes a child who has been medically diagnosed to have significantly subaverage intellectual functioning - an IQ of 70 or below.
24. NYSTAGMUS is a condition characterized by rapid, rhythmic flickering movements of the eyeball.
25. OCULAR HYPERTELORISM is the term used to describe an abnormal distance between the eyes.
26. ORTHOPEDICALLY HANDICAPPED describes a child who has been medically diagnosed as having a deformity or disease(s) of the spine, bones, joints, muscles or any other part of the skeletal system.
27. PARAPLEGIC is a resulting condition of paralysis of the lower limbs, often accompanied by malfunction of the rectum and the bladder.
28. PSYCHOTHERAPY is a method of treating psychiatric or mental disorders based on verbal communication between the therapist and patient.
29. RELINQUISHMENT ADOPTION is an adoption in which a child is relinquished for adoption to an agency by its parent(s) and the agency chooses the prospective adoptive parent(s) for that child and places the child for adoption.
30. RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT means specialized treatment centers for children; ranging in type from group homes for mildly disturbed children to state hospital units for the care of chronically and severely mentally ill children.
31. SCHIZOPHRENIA is a mental illness which is characterized by withdrawal and irrational thinking. The main symptoms of schizophrenia are delusions (false beliefs) and hallucinations, which are usually auditory (perceived through hearing).

32. SENSORIALLY DEPRIVED means blindness or deafness (full or partial).
33. SPECIAL NEEDS CHILD is a child whose adoption without financial assistance is unlikely because of adverse parental background, ethnic background, race, color, language, membership in a sibling group which should remain intact, mental, physical, medical or emotional handicaps or age of three years or more.
34. SPINAL BIFIDA occurs when the spinal cord coverings and the bone and skin over the spinal cord have not formed properly in the development of a newborn. Child suffers from lack of function in the legs and of urine and bowel control.
35. STRABISMUS also known as Squinting or Cross-Eyes, is a condition where the eyes do not remain parallel; one or the other eye wanders from the direction in which the gaze is directed.
36. THERAPY is a method of treatment for a medical, psychiatric or surgical condition.
37. TORTICOLLIS is a condition in which the neck is bent to one side or the other or an involuntary twitching of the neck from one side to the other. This condition can be permanent.



Meet Victor, a handsome likeable young man who enjoys telling stories and jokes. Victor was born July 14, 1974 and has no religious preference. He is enjoyable, personable and wants to have a family of his own.

Victor has many interests including sports, videos, cooking, shopping and family outings. As with most youngsters, Victor's career goals have undergone several revisions, but he has his sights on becoming an Air Force pilot. Victor's foster parents note his willingness to perform his assigned "around-the-house" chores.

Socially, Victor oftentimes displays immature behavior. He needs to put great effort into his school work to achieve average grades. His school has recommended that he be placed in a behavior disorder classroom so he can receive the extra attention he needs to develop and mature. He is receiving counseling and is making progress in self-awareness, accountability for behavior, and resolving past separation issues. Counseling may need to continue after adoption. He gets along well with adults, but is intolerant of teasing and conflicts among his peers and sometimes reacts physically.

An energetic, single or two-parent family who can give much attention, affection and support to Victor, as well as be tolerant of impulsive behaviors, will be considered. He will also need continued help to accept

responsibility for his behavior. Victor's adoptive family will find him a fine addition to their home.

California's
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AGENCY ADDRESS

Adoption Horizons
Winfred Martin
(213) 635-4567



Meet Victor, a handsome likeable young man who enjoys telling stories and jokes. Victor was born July 14, 1974 and has no religious preference. He is an enjoyable personable and wants to have a family of his own.

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